

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ICRC, PFOR, IS, EG
SUBJECT: ISRAELI BODIES

REF: (A) STATE 162164, (B) CAIRO 8935

1. PURSUANT REFTEL A, I AGAIN RAISED WITH GAMASY, JULY 20, THE MATTER OF THE ISRAELI BODIES. I RECALLED THAT, WHEN WE HAD LAST DISCUSSED THE QUESTION ON MAY 12 (CAIRO 6561), HE HAD INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO RETURN THE NINE ISRAELI MILITARY BODIES AND THE TWO BODIES OF SPIES IN EXCHANGE FOR THE EGYPTIAN PRISONERS HELD BY THE ISRAELIS. WE HAD COMMUNICATED THIS TO THE ISRAELIS AND ARE UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT THERE IS A WILLINGNESS TO ARRANGE SUCH AN EXCHANGE. IN OUR VIEW, THE MATTER CAN HEREAFTER BEST BE PURSUED THROUGH ICRC OR THE JC

2. GAMASY RECALLED HIS COMMITMENT. TO THE BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE, HOWEVER, THERE HAS BEEN NO ISRAELI RESPONSE TO HIS OFFER. I THEN MENTIONED MY TALK WITH MAGDUB IN WHICH THE LATTER HAD TOLD ME ABOUT THE DISPUTE ON NUMBERS OF EGYPTIAN PRISONERS (REFTEL B). HAD THIS NOW BEEN RESOLVED,

3. GAMASY SAID THAT, SINCE HIS RETURN, HE HAS BEEN TOO BUSY TO DISCUSS THE SUBJECT WITH MAGDUB. HE DID
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RECALL SOME DIFFERENCE OF VIEW ON NUMBERS OF EGYPTIAN

PRISONERS HELD. THE ISRAELIS HAD AT ONE TIME OFFERED TO RETURN ALL THE EGYPTIAN PRISONERS EXCEPT THOSE JAILED FOR MURDER, ESPIONAGE AND OTHER SERIOUS CRIMES. HOWEVER, THE ISRAELIS HAVE UP TO NOW REFUSED TO PROVIDE GOE WITH A LIST OF PRISONERS THEY HOLD.

4. ACKNOWLEDGING THE IMPORTANCE THE ISRAELIS ATTACH TO THE BODIES, GAMASY AGAIN SAID HE IS WILLING TO SETTLE THE ISSUE. IF THE ISRAELIS WILL PROVIDE GOE WITH A LIST OF THE PRISONERS THEY PROPOSE TO RETURN, AND IF THAT LIST IS SATISFACTORY, THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE EXCHANGE OF THE BODIES AND EGYPTIAN PRISONERS CAN BE MADE THROUGH THE ICRC OR THE JC. GAMASY NOTED THAT SADAT'S COMMITMENT TO THE SECRETARY HAD REFERRED ONLY TO THE NINE MILITARY BODIES. HOWEVER, HE REITERATED HIS WILLINGNESS TO RETURN THE TWO BODIES OF THE ISRAELI SPIES AS WELL IN ORDER TO FINISH THE ISSUE.

5. HE INDICATED HE HAS NO OBJECTION TO OUR PASSING THIS TO THE ISRAELIS IF WE WISH AND THEY CAN TAKE IT FROM THERE, EITHER THROUGH THE ICRC OR THE JC.

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